Dear Members of the College Community,

Pima Community College has for the past few weeks been closely monitoring the situation surrounding a potential shutdown of the federal government. While the unfortunate state of affairs in Washington remains very fluid, it appears as if much of our government will cease to function as normal at midnight tonight.

Based on what we know at this time, the College does not anticipate that a short-term shutdown will have a significant impact on our students or employees.

Students should know that if a shutdown occurs, PCC will hold classes and offer services as it always does. According to the Department of Education and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), financial aid will be unaffected. Pell Grants, the Direct Student Loan program, and Perkins Career and Technical Education funds will continue to be disbursed.

While the Department of Education expects that it will furlough 94 percent of its staff during the first week of a shutdown, department websites would remain available, as would student loan servicer sites. But because of the furlough, the department’s ability to provide technical assistance or other services related to its operations would be severely curtailed.

Employees should know that pay will continue as normal. If the shutdown lasts an extended time, some grant-funded programs may be affected.

Regarding SEOG, TRIO, GEARUP, Title III and Title V programs, a shutdown may not affect disbursement of funds, nor would it affect past grants, according to the AACC.

It is not clear how the shutdown would affect funds that become available on October 1 for Workforce Investment Act Title I programs. According to the AACC, these funds were provided in advance in Fiscal Year 2013 appropriations legislation. The Department of Labor plans for a few employees to remain on the job to authorize necessary funds.

As always, we will keep you posted as events transpire.

Lee D. Lambert,
Chancellor